

Message Text

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SUBJ: AMBASSADOR EARLE'S STATEMENT OF JUNE 14, 1977 (SALT TWO -
1221)

THE FOLLOWING IS STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR EARLE
AT THE SALT TWO MEETING OF JUNE 14, 1977.

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR EARLE

JUNE 14, 1977

MR. MINISTER,

TODAY I WANT TO ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF DUAL-CAPABLE LAUNCHERS --
THAT IS, LAUNCHERS WHICH ARE CAPABLE OF LAUNCHING BOTH ICBMS AND
BALLISTIC MISSILES OF LESS THAN ICBM RANGE -- AND, IN PARTICULAR, TO
DISCUSS THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM CREATED BY THE SOVIET DEVELOPMENT OF
A LAUNCHER WHICH THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES TO BE DUAL-CAPABLE.

THE SIDES ARE AGREED THAT ALL ICBM LAUNCHERS EXCEPT TEST AND
TRAINING LAUNCHERS MUST BE SUBJECT TO THE 2400 AGGREGATE LIMITATION.

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THE UNITED STATES INTERPRETS THIS TO MEAN THAT A LAUNCHER WHICH HAS
THE CAPABILITY TO LAUNCH AN ICBM MUST BE COUNTED IN THE 2400 AGGREGATE
LIMITATION IRRESPECTIVE OF ANY OTHER CAPABILITY IT MAY HAVE.
THUS ANY TYPE OF BALLISTIC MISSILE LAUNCHER WHICH HAS THE CAPABILITY
TO LAUNCH ICBMS AS WELL AS BALLISTIC MISSILES OF LESS THAN
INTERCONTINENTAL RANGE SHOULD BE CONSTRAINED BY THE NEW AGREEMENT.
WITHOUT SUCH CONSTRAINTS THE VIABILITY OF THE NEW AGREEMENT WOULD BE

UNDERMINED.

THE SOVIET DELEGATION HAS PROPOSED THAT THE PARTIES UNDERTAKE NOT TO CONVERT LAND-BASED BALLISTIC MISSILE LAUNCHERS WHICH ARE NOT ICBM LAUNCHERS INTO LAUNCHERS FOR LAUNCHING ICBMS. HOWEVER, THE SOVIET PROPOSAL ADDRESSES ONLY THOSE LAUNCHERS WHICH ARE NOT CURRENTLY CAPABLE OF LAUNCHING ICBMS; IT DOES NOT ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF DUAL-CAPABLE LAUNCHERS.

FURTHER, THE SOVIET DELEGATION HAS STATED THAT THE QUESTION OF DUAL-CAPABLE LAUNCHERS IS "HYPOTHETICAL AND SPECULATIVE." ON THE CONTRARY, HOWEVER, THERE ALREADY EXISTS A SOVIET LAND-MOBILE BALLISTIC MISSILE LAUNCHER WHICH THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES TO BE CAPABLE OF LAUNCHING BOTH THE SS-20 IRBM AND THE SS-16 ICBM. THE EXISTENCE OF THIS LAUNCHER DEMONSTRATES CLEARLY THE NECESSITY FOR DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM IN A WAY WHICH WILL ELIMINATE ANY AMBIGUITIES ABOUT HOW SUCH LAUNCHERS ARE TO BE TREATED UNDER THE NEW AGREEMENT.

IN THIS REGARD THE SPECIFIC QUESTION OF THE SOVIET LAUNCHER JUST MENTIONED POSES A SERIOUS PROBLEM. BECAUSE THIS LAUNCHER IS APPARENTLY CAPABLE OF LAUNCHING THE SS-16 ICBM, AS WELL AS THE SS-20 IRBM, IT IS THE UNITED STATES VIEW THAT ALL SUCH LAUNCHERS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE 2400 AGGREGATE LIMITATION. WE TAKE THIS VIEW BECAUSE IT APPEARS THAT THESE LAUNCHERS, EVEN THOUGH THEY MAY BE DEPLOYED WITH SS-20S, COULD AT ANY TIME BE EQUIPPED WITH SS-16S.

HOWEVER, IT MAY BE POSSIBLE FOR OUR TWO DELEGATIONS TO FIND ANOTHER SOLUTION WHICH WOULD SATISFY OUR CONCERNS. ACCORDINGLY,

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THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION WOULD BE WILLING TO CONSIDER ANY VERIFIABLE ARRANGEMENTS WHICH THE SOVIET SIDE MIGHT PROPOSE TO UNDERTAKE WHICH WOULD ENABLE THE UNITED STATES TO BE ASSURED THAT LAUNCHERS OF THE TYPE ASSOCIATED WITH THE SS-20 IRBM CANNOT ALSO BE USED TO LAUNCH ICBMS AND IN PARTICULAR CANNOT BE USED TO LAUNCH SS-16S.

MR. MINISTER, TODAY I HAVE DISCUSSED THE GENERAL PROBLEM OF DUAL-CAPABLE LAUNCHERS. I HAVE ALSO DISCUSSED THE SPECIFIC QUESTION REGARDING THE SOVIET LAND-MOBILE LAUNCHER WHICH THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES TO BE CAPABLE OF LAUNCHING BOTH SS-20 IRBMS AND SS-16 ICBMS. I WILL BE INTERESTED IN HEARING YOUR FURTHER VIEWS ON THESE ISSUES. END STATEMENT.EARLE

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